

Marked up Claims

12. A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner by a system comprising a database storing data representing capabilities of trading partners, in numerical form and a controller, the method comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

[storing in a trading partner database data representing capabilities of trading partners, in numerical form;

presenting a matter to the trading partners;]

10 receiving bidding prices from the trading partners;

reading data on the trading partners, in numerical form, from the trading partner database; and

15 selecting a trading partner or trading partners for the matter based on the received bidding prices and the read data represented in numerical form.

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14. A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 12, further comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

30 weighting the data representing capabilities of trading partners, in numerical form, according to an article subjected to the bidding; and

selecting a trading partner or trading partners for the matter, based on the bidding prices and the weighted data represented in numerical form.

15. A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 14, further comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

representing a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form;

adding the price difference represented in numerical form to the weighted data represented in numerical form; and

selecting trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the addition.

16. A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 14, further comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

representing a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form;

multiplying the weighted data represented in numerical form by the price difference represented in numerical form; and

selecting trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the multiplication.

17. A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 12, further comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

choosing a selecting routine from a plurality of predetermined selecting routines; and

selecting a trading partner or trading partners for the matter by executing the chosen selecting routine.